In claim 5, line 2 replace "the" with --a--.

In claim 8, line 1 replace "4" with --7--.

In claim 8, line 1 replace "the" with --a--.

11. (Amended) The device of claim 5 wherein the base of said needle is coupled to a housing having a forward end, said needle extending axially from said forward end of said housing, and wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion.

18. (Amended) The device of claim 16 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said [hub] housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard including a recess for receiving said protrusion.

19. (Amended) The device of claim 18 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad positioned on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

20. (Amended) The device of claim 18 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp

positioned on said latching arm for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.

23. (Amended) The device of claim 21 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said hub, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard having a recess for receiving said protrusion.[.]

24. (Amended) The device of claim 23 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

25. (Amended) The device of claim 23 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.

In claim 99, line 2, replace "the" with --a--.

In claim 102, line 1, replace "98" with --101--.

In claim 102, line 1, replace "the" with --a--.

105. (Amended) The device of claim 99 wherein the base of said needle is coupled to a housing having a forward end, said needle extending axially from said forward end of said housing, and wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion.

112. (Amended) The device of claim 110 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said [hub] housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard including a recess for receiving said protrusion.

113. (Amended) The device of claim 112 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad positioned on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

114. (Amended) The device of claim 112 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp positioned on said latching arm for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.

117. (Amended) The device of claim 115 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said hub, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard having a recess for receiving said protrusion.

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118. (Amended) The device of claim 117 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

119. (Amended) The device of claim 117 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.

In claim 143, line 2, replace "the" with --a--.

In claim 146, line 1, replace "142" with --145--.

In claim 146, line 1, replace "the" with --a--.

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149. (Amended) The device of claim 143 wherein the base of said needle is coupled to a housing having a forward end, said needle extending axially from said forward end of said housing, and wherein said retaining means comprises a latching

arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion.

156. (Amended) The device of claim 154 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said [hub] housing, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard including a recess for receiving said protrusion.

157. (Amended) The device of claim 156 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad positioned on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

158. (Amended) The device of claim 156 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means, wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp positioned on said latching arm for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.

161. (Amended) The device of claim 159 further comprising retaining means for releasably retaining said needle guard near the base of said needle, wherein said retaining means comprises a latching arm having a proximal end and a distal end, said

proximal end of said latching arm hingedly attached to said wall section of said hub, said distal end of said latching arm comprising a protrusion, said needle guard having a recess for receiving said protrusion..

162. (Amended) The device of claim 161 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means wherein said triggering means comprises a finger pad on said latching arm for manually disengaging said latching arm from said needle guard.

163. (Amended) The device of claim 161 further comprising triggering means for releasing said retaining means wherein said triggering means comprises a ramp for biasing said latching arm in an outward manner when a rearward force is applied to said needle guard.